

Maryland Board of Pharmacy

Public Board Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2005

Attendance: John Balch, President, Jeanne Furman, Secretary, and Mark Levi, Treasurer

Commissioners: Margie Anne Bonnett, David Chason, Joseph DeMino, Mayer Handelman, Donald Taylor, Rodney Taylor, Michael Souranis, and Donald Yee

Staff: LaVerne Naesea, Executive Director, Linda Bethman, Board Counsel, Chandra Mouli, Pharmacist Compliance Officer, Colin Eversley, Compliance Investigator, Shirley Costley, Licensing Manager, Patricia Gaither, Administrative Manager, Summar Goodman, Public Information & Education Officer, and Tamarra Banks, MIS Manager, Christina Harvin, Regulations & Legislative Manager, and Anna Jeffers, Regulations & Legislations Officer

The Board conducted Board/Staff Retreat on November 16, 2005, at which the discussion and presentation of: small group breakouts, formulation of FY 2007 – 2012 Goals and Objectives, next Steps, and closing remarks were discussed during the open Public Board meeting proceedings. See below Minutes and summary of discussion during the public proceedings.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Following the summary of Board operations and accomplishments, Board and staff agreed to continue in the strategic direction established by the participants of the 2001 Board Retreat. Specifically, participants agreed that the Board's Mission, Vision, Guiding Principles and Goals should not be changed. That agreed upon strategic direction is provided below:

MISSION – To protect Maryland consumers and to promote quality health care in the field of pharmacy through licensing pharmacists and issuing permits to pharmacies, and distributors; setting standards for the practice of pharmacy through regulations and legislation; educating consumers; and receiving and resolving complaints from the public regarding pharmacists, pharmacies, and distributors.

VISION: Setting a standard for pharmaceutical services, which ensure safety and quality health care for the citizens of Maryland.

VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Integrity – The Board selected integrity as its over-arching value. It is defined through the following guiding principles:

Trust - Treating all parties served in ways that will demonstrate that the board of pharmacy is honest, impartial, professionally competent, consistent and ethical; that all of our actions and judgments are

legal and appropriately serve customers and stakeholders. The board respects and appropriately maintains the confidentiality of the individuals and groups that it represents and regulates.

Quality Service - The board offers accurate, timely and appropriate services to customers and stakeholders by being responsive, accessible, respectful, attentive, consistent and tactful, in accordance with its unified vision.

Responsibility - The Board carries out disciplinary and licensing activities in an impartial, comprehensive and appropriate manner. The Board addresses issues in accordance with established written guidelines, policies, and procedures. Decisions are only made after gathering and analyzing all pertinent information available from all parties involved.

BOARD GOALS:

Goal 1. The Maryland Board of Pharmacy will utilize various means of communication to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of Board activities.

Goal 2. An efficient, fair and consistent compliance process that enhances the quality of care provided through licensed health care professionals and the regulated industry.

Goal 3. The Maryland Board of Pharmacy has well-qualified human resources that can accomplish the Board's mission.

Goal 4. The public is informed about the availability of pharmaceutical services and how appropriate medication use can enhance the quality of care and safety.

Goal 5. Strong partnerships with stakeholders (to include governmental officials, consumer groups and the regulated pharmacy industry) who are educated and informed about pharmacy related issues that affect health care quality, and the safety and welfare of the citizens of Maryland.

Goal 6. Statutes and regulations that govern the practice of pharmacy, as well as the policies of the Board, reflect current standards of practice.

Goal 7. Pharmacists and permit holders have access to timely and relevant information and guidance that helps improve their practices, safely utilize new technology and remain current with the regulations and policies of the Board.

FY 2007 & 2008 STRATEGIC ISSUES

The objectives identified for Board addressing during the 2001 Retreat were reviewed by participants. After careful deliberation it was agreed that the 2001 objectives should change based on five *Strategic Issues* of concern identified by the 2005 retreat participants. In total, 11 new objectives were identified during the Public Meeting in order to adequately address the Strategic Issues. Participants voted to support each issue and objective during the Public Meeting held on the afternoon of the November 2005 Board Retreat:

Issue 1 - Permit Holder Review

Background: Board and staff members expressed concerns regarding the need for strengthened oversight of pharmacy and wholesale distributors permits. As a result, two objectives were established under this issue.

Objective 1 – To revise the inspection process for permit holders by performing inspections on its own behalf.

Objective 2 – To revise the Wholesale Distributor evaluation process.

Issue 2 – Staffing and Reorganization

Background: Participants emphasized the need to build a culture of teamwork among Board staff members including member and staff training. Concerns were also expressed regarding the need for permanent employees rather than temporary and short-term (one year) contractual employees. A need for a long standing Pharmacist Compliance Officer and sufficient compliance investigation staff was also identified. Another area of concern regarded promotions for management staff. Also discussed was the Board's difficult experiences in attracting and retaining staff members because of the system used for designating Boards staff positions. Three additional Board objectives were developed in relation to discussed concerns:

Objective 3 – Hire sufficient permanent personnel

Objective 4 – Support legislation to allow the Board of Pharmacy to have salary setting authority

Objective 5 – Hire additional compliance staff to more effectively investigate cases, track cases under Board orders and responds to inquiries.

Issue 3 – Public Information

Background: Retreat participants discussed the fact that the Board had not focused sufficient efforts in order to educate the public about medication safety. In addition to outreach through various public events, participants also felt that the Board should consider organizing consumer focus groups to learn more about citizen concerns, creating a separate newsletter for Maryland consumers and pharmacy technicians and creating individual web site pages for pharmacy technicians, pharmacists and consumers. The fifth objective was established to address those concerns:

Objective 6 – Develop methods to improve education and outreach to practitioners and consumers.

Issue 4 – Compliance

Background: Discussion ensued regarding the need to develop guidelines for sanctions or resolutions of cases. Participants felt that Disciplinary Committee meetings could run more smoothly with an organized agenda and guidelines available to committee members for recommending Board actions. The guidelines would be based upon previous actions taken for similar, substantiated violations. Objective 6 addressed concerns under Strategic Issue 4:

Objective 6 – Ensure consistent disciplinary actions.

Issue 5 – Technology

Background: Participants discussed the need to take advantage of the rapidly expanding technology available for managing activities undertaken at the Board. In addition to the need to integrate database systems, there was need expressed to reduce the amount of paper documents shared by Board members. New initiatives such as electronic meetings, providing licensees with real-time access to licensing information and making changes to certain basic information were discussed at length. Also discussed was the need to reduce and prevent IT systems downtime while continuing to enhance database systems for use by all units. Objectives 7, 8 and 9 were established to ensure that all technology options available were reviewed and considered for implementation at the Board:

Objective 7 – Establish a more efficient computer based system for all Board units

Objective 8 – Reduce paper documents and systems failures through continued systems enhancements

Objective 9 - Increase the availability of information and services on-line

Issue 6 – Government Relations

Background: The retreat participants expressed several concerns regarding the relationship between the Division of Drug Control and the Board. Specifically, the inspections performed on behalf of the Board were limited, the staff of the two DHMH units did not work closely together in reviewing and investigating cases, and the inspections performed required upgrading because many of the aspects reviewed during inspections do not accurately address the numerous regulatory and statutory changes in federal and state laws since the process was developed. Also discussed were concerns related to why the Department would not allow the Board to perform inspections on its own behalf. The final two objectives were established to ensure that Board inspections adequately protect Maryland consumers.

Objective 10 – Improve relations with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene so that they have a better understanding of the need for the Board to perform inspections on its own behalf.

Objective 11 – Move the inspections functions performed on behalf of the Board under the direct responsibility of the Board.